United Nations E/2014/NGO/28

Economic and Social Council

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High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by International Fertilizer Industry Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

14-03850 (E) 210514

Please recycle

Statement

Food and nutrition security should be a stand-alone, bold and prominent goal in the post-2015 development agenda. The target of halving extreme poverty rates by 2015 compared with 1990 levels has been met. However, halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger will not be achieved. The new sustainable development goal should therefore be to eliminate hunger. Much of the food we eat today (and more of the food that will be needed in the future) is and will be produced through the use of mineral fertilizers. The countries with the lowest levels of mineral fertilizer use also have the lowest levels of agricultural productivity and the highest levels of hunger. In addition, enhancing fertilizers with micronutrients is an innovative strategy to help eliminate micronutrient deficiencies around the world, leading to the eradication of malnutrition. Empowering farmers, particularly women farmers, in all regions to produce more with less can raise productivity dramatically. The combination of quality inputs and good agricultural practices can increase yields up to three times.

The following are recommendations for the post-2015 agenda:

(a) Increase food production and improving diets. Not only are food and nutrition security measurable in terms of hunger; they also have long-term implications for a country's well-being;

(b) Invest in agriculture. Investments in agriculture, particularly agricultural research and development, have been demonstrated to be one of the best strategies for promoting overall poverty alleviation and economic development by increasing agricultural productivity and rural incomes;

(c) Sustainably increase food production and build sustainable food systems. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to achieve the goals of sustainable intensification in a wide range of landscapes and agroecological zones. A mosaic of solutions will be required to improve the way farmers operate. However, farmers cannot do without fertilizers because they contribute to biodiversity conservation by increasing yields on existing arable land;

(d) Focus on smallholders, women farmers and the most vulnerable. Agricultural programmes are needed that are farmer-centred and knowledge-based, so that the full potential of commercial and smallholder farmers, both men and women, can be harnessed. By increasing women farmers' access to productive resources, food and nutrition security could be increased globally by up to 4 per cent per year;

(e) Build a conducive business environment, including good governance and investment in food systems. Such an environment also includes well-functioning institutions (notably to protect intellectual property and land rights) and mechanisms to fight corruption and bribery;

(f) Establish inclusive business models as sustainable business solutions. The post-2015 development process should engage the private sector as an equal partner and stakeholder in the agenda for food security and sustainable agriculture and in further partnerships to scale up good practices.

The International Fertilizer Industry Association recommends the adoption of two goals for agriculture, food and nutrition security:

(a) Eradicating hunger and malnutrition;

(b) Adopting sustainable agricultural practices.

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Statement submitted by International Movement ATD Fourth World, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

International Movement ATD Fourth World conducted a participatory evaluation of the impact of the Millennium Development Goals on people living in extreme poverty from early 2011 to late 2013 with the aim of contributing to the achievement of the Goals. The evaluation involved more than 2,000 people from 22 countries, a majority of whom were people living in poverty or in extreme poverty.

The core of the research was carried out in 12 of the countries in which International Movement ATD Fourth World has an active presence: Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Peru, Philippines and Poland. The inclusion of some developed countries emphasizes the fact that chronic poverty exists around the world, not only in those countries targeted by the Millennium Development Goals, preparing the ground for proposals for the next sustainable development agenda, which aims at being universal.

This process enabled participants to speak out about the violence of extreme poverty, a violation of dignity and of all human rights worsened by processes of stigmatization, discrimination, humiliation and exclusion. Top-down attempts at fighting poverty often end up harming impoverished communities which, as a result, remain entrenched in extreme poverty because their long history of persecution and exploitation is not taken into account. Extreme poverty represents an unacceptable waste of human potential.

Thinking together on an equal footing with people trapped in extreme poverty requires overcoming many obstacles on both sides of the discussion. People living in poverty need time to build a collective understanding of their situation as well as to construct a sense of pride that counteracts their stigmatization and isolation. For better-off people, sharing power is frequently the most daunting challenge. It requires a commitment to a dialogue among equals, rooted in a sense of justice and a desire to develop more effective policies.

The global dialogue on the post-2015 agenda needs both to connect and to distinguish between inequality, poverty and extreme poverty. More adequate and participatory ways to measure poverty and extreme poverty are needed to dispel the illusions created by misleading global statistics. The $1.25-a-day criterion should no longer be considered as a reliable global measure of extreme poverty. Programmes based on the Millennium Development Goals have not reached the most impoverished populations and have ignored the connection between inequality, poverty and climate justice. In order for the post-2015 development agenda to succeed in reducing disparities and eradicating extreme poverty, development targets should be considered to have been met only when they have been met for all relevant groups, including the bottom 20 per cent in every population, from the national to the local level. A new model of development should include peacebuilding and institution-building goals to support fragile and post-conflict States, and to align development targets with a human rights framework.

The participatory research made it clear that, very often, development projects work against people living in extreme poverty, not for them. Ill-adapted development projects harm them, and, sometimes, international aid acts to silence the most impoverished. Investments frequently fail to reach impoverished people doing informal work or to provide them with quality health care, social protection

systems, housing or sanitation. Gender equality must be enhanced through changes in mindsets and laws, and the contributions of migrants must be recognized.

The mixed results on education-related targets of the Millennium Development Goals suggest that programmes need to provide equitable access to learning. Obstacles to this include discrimination against, and stigmatization of, disadvantaged students and their parents, the hidden costs of "free education"; students' lack of legal identity documents and the growing trend towards privatizing education to the detriment of public schools. Quality education for all requires a learning environment based on partnership and cooperation between teachers, students, parents and communities. This approach leads to learning outcomes that truly benefit students and communities. Fighting against stigmatization and discrimination is crucial in the commitment to eradicate extreme poverty. The participatory evaluation underlines that people experiencing poverty would like to be able to participate more widely in the development process itself. There are many barriers to participation in development programmes at both the local and national levels, as well as in international development institutions. Yet, the participation of people living in poverty is a learning and regenerating process for people and institutions that commit to it.

Our recommendations for the post-2015 development agenda:

1. Leave no one behind

"It's difficult to access rights. Some people end up renouncing their rights. What also keeps us in poverty are the discrimination and humiliations faced by the poor. The way the poor are looked at is so harsh that poverty remains hidden: people are ashamed." (Participant from France.)

Leaving no one behind requires eliminating discrimination based, among other things, on gender, income or social status, and actively reaching out to the most impoverished population groups. It also requires taking into account the significant social, cultural, economic and structural obstacles faced by persons living in poverty, and aligning development targets and their implementation with human rights norms and standards, in keeping with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.

2. Introduce people living in poverty as new partners in building knowledge about more sustainable forms of development

"There's plenty of aid here. But they give it out without knowing who are the worst off, so the poorest are often not aided at all. This aid creates jealousy, divides our community and ends up isolating the poorest even more and worsening their situation." (Participant from Senegal.)

"Even in extreme poverty, a person has ideas. If these ideas aren't recognized, people fall even deeper into poverty." (Participant from Burkina Faso.)

Shaping a world where all people can live decently and have a place in their community requires putting at the heart of development projects a genuine partnership with people living in extreme poverty. It is difficult to define poverty with a limited number of dimensions. Most existing measures such as the Alkire Foster method and the Multidimensional Poverty Index of the United Nations Development Programme share common aspects. However, as leading anti-poverty researchers demonstrate, existing measures often underplay the significance of

"more qualitative elements (powerlessness, stigma, discrimination and isolation, for example)". These omissions can also hide the interconnectedness of various forms of deprivation and the nature of poverty in higher-income countries.

International Movement ATD Fourth World urges Member States and data collection specialists to give special attention to these hidden dimensions of poverty and to make strides to include them in national measures of poverty. The merging-knowledge methodology developed by International Movement ATD Fourth World could help define and quantify such additional measures.

3. Promote an economy that respects people and the environment

"Lack of clothing, fear, exclusion, feelings of rejection, shame and shyness are obstacles for young people to attend vocational training and to look for jobs. Fundamental human rights are not respected: right to food, housing, health, birth certificates... The human side is neglected." (Participants from Madagascar.)

In a world with limited natural resources and rapidly growing inequalities, a profound economic transformation is needed in production and consumption patterns and in wealth distribution to stop the plundering of natural resources and to eradicate extreme poverty. With a stand-alone goal on employment and decent work for all in the new development agenda, the international community will create the space for more specific targets for this area. Through our participatory evaluation, International Movement ATD Fourth World identified the following barriers to full employment and decent work for the most excluded:

- Pervasive violation of workers' rights and human dignity at work
- Lacking rights awareness, participation, collective organization and accountability mechanisms
- Prominence of precarious and vulnerable work
- Permanence of an unprotected informal sector
- Lack of marketable skills and job-training opportunities for people living in poverty

Full employment and decent work for all should be supported by new investments for the transition to a more environmentally friendly economic model, including the implementation of social protection floors at the national level in all countries. An international mechanism is needed to fund and support their establishment where sufficient resources do not exist. The design, monitoring and implementation mechanisms should include the participation of trade unions, civil society and those living in extreme poverty.

4. Achieve education and training for all based on cooperation, not on competition, among students, teachers, parents and communities

"When I was in school in the provinces, my mother couldn't find money to buy school materials. I was sent home every time I didn't have the required book. In the end, I left school without learning anything. When we arrived in Port-au-Prince, I was enrolled again, but I couldn't attend for the same reasons as before." (Participant from Haiti.)

Most participants in the evaluation process stated that school is the best way for children to overcome poverty — provided that the teaching process and course

contents are adapted to the needs of the entire community, not just of the better-off families. They requested education programmes that: remove hidden barriers to quality education (like discrimination or additional costs); create an environment conducive to a partnership between parents and schools; build cooperative forms of education in partnership with communities; develop context-appropriate education, eliminating the pervasive discrimination of disadvantaged students and parents by schoolteachers and staff, as well as by fellow students; and ensure high-quality education with improved results for people in poverty.

5. Promote peace through participatory good governance

"Who wants this kind of life? We dream of a better life, including decent housing and a full education for everyone. We make an effort to move on but we cannot do very much alone. We need support. We also wish to contribute to development, excluding no one, leaving no one behind. We want to work together as partners. This is how everyone's dignity and rights can be respected." (Participants from the Philippines, living in informal settlements in cemeteries and under bridges.)

Participatory mechanisms at all levels of governance should be developed, in line with the provisions set out in the Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights: "States must ensure the active, free, informed and meaningful participation of persons living in poverty at all stages of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of decisions and policies affecting them... Particular care should be taken to fully include the poorest and most socially excluded persons."

Local, national and international institutions should encourage participatory governance. The incentives for staff in local, national and international institutions and administrations should be modified to make their governance processes more conducive to implementing participatory approaches.

Impoverished communities should be able to participate properly in governance. Participation cannot be imposed, and time must be taken to listen to entire communities, not just community "leaders". Building the capacity of communities to self-organize and build links with wider society should be a priority. The role of civil society organizations that provide space for people living in poverty to speak with their own voices and take part in decision-making processes should be recognized.

Finally, it is necessary to ensure transparency at all levels of governance while creating accountability mechanisms at the national and international levels. The effects of participation and the reasons behind governmental and intergovernmental decisions must be clear for all to see. Independent ombudsmen, judicial processes and peer-review systems between countries can all help ensure that participatory governance is not just tokenism.

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Statement submitted by International Ontopsychology Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

14-56079 (E) 260614

Please recycle

Statement

On 16 February 2014, the International Ontopsychology Association held a symposium in Brazil on the theme of the 2014 session of the Economic and Social Council, with the participation of its Antonio Meneghetti Faculty and the Institute of Ontopsychology of Saint Petersburg State University (Russian Federation). Students, faculty members, civil society groups and private sector representatives participated. The Government of Brazil was represented by an official from the Ministry of Education, state-level education officials and local prefects and municipal authorities.

The representative of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions to the United Nations chaired the panel, giving an opening speech in which she described how the Millennium Development Goals had been developed, the stage that they had reached, the new direction leading to the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda and the partnerships encouraged by the Economic and Social Council through Goal 8.

The Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch in the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat described the current state of discussions on the outcome of the 14 years of efforts to achieve the Goals and on the negotiations leading to the post-2015 development agenda. A consensus between nations remained a major challenge.

The representative of United Nations Academic Impact described the role of his entity in promoting education and training on the Goals and on the post-2015 development agenda. Discussions on that agenda were described as a bottom-up exercise that must involve all segments of society, including civil society organizations, academics, the private sector and Governments.

Other panellists addressed the issue of convergence between human rights and the Millennium Declaration and the Goals; the inclusion of humanitarian law in the post-2015 development agenda was considered a priority for the sustainable development goals. A new goal, on access to justice, should be added. A panellist gave an extensive presentation on the correlation between the Goals and corporate social responsibility, as well as a description of the remaining challenges to sustainable development throughout the world.

The head of the Antonio Meneghetti Faculty opened the debate by recalling that sustainability must begin with individuals who were themselves sustainable and responsible. Participants expressed the view that students must give back to society and therefore receive training on the challenges of attaining the Goals and the future sustainable development goals in their careers. Participants agreed that all segments of society must work together to help to achieve the post-2015 development agenda. A spirit of inclusion must prevail in teaching and training in order to build and replicate the valuable lessons learned. The ontopsychological pedagogical approach was considered an efficient tool to help to reach the United Nations goals and objectives.

The participants reached the following conclusions:

(a) Access to justice should be a new goal in the post-2015 development agenda;

(b) Academic institutions must promote the pedagogy of liberty, closely associated with responsibility;

(c) The academic curriculum should be articulated around the concept of meritocracy, in order to encourage women, minorities and young people to empower themselves and to ensure their inclusion within the post-2015 development agenda.

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Statement submitted by International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

Time and again, it has been acknowledged by the United Nations that the benefits of globalization have been one-sided and have benefited a small minority to the detriment of the larger majority. While small pockets of private wealth have grown beyond acceptable limits, an increasing number of people in every country have been marginalized. This development model has proved unhealthy for the sustainability of societies and the planet itself. We need a transformative agenda. This is clear from what we hear in the United Nations conference halls and outside.

For a study done by the members of the International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, indigenous people from Australia, Canada, Ecuador, India, New Zealand and the Philippines were interviewed. This study indicates that the current developmental model has resulted in the dislocation of many of these people and, as towns and cities are built, severed their connections with their land and culture.

The empowerment models they share are experiences of women gaining confidence by developing basic business and farming skills and selling their handicrafts; tribal women becoming more aware of their rights and claiming them with support from one another; women establishing self-help groups and improving maternal health; tribal people using their own herbal remedies and training others in natural health remedies; girls attending school and completing secondary education, which increases their upward social mobility; and finally, more educated indigenous people working in law, health, education and social work to support their own people.

A rights-based approach to development would mean that people have a say in the kind of future they want. "Strategies for empowerment, voices from the grassroots", a survey conducted by the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Committee for Social Development with 36 programmes in 19 countries, indicates that programmes that include community members at all levels empower people to become future agents of change in their own community. Poverty eradication and empowerment happen when affected people have the capacity to critique their own reality from a human rights perspective and decide for themselves the kind of future they want. Sustainable communities make for sustainable development. For this they must have their fundamental human needs met.

We recommend:

- Implementation of a universal social protection floor
- Governments that are responsible and accountable to all the people and not controlled by corporations or other vested interest groups
- Greater public sector enterprises
- Regulation of big businesses and implementation of progressive taxation to reduce inequalities
- Participation of local communities in the planning of programmes that affect their economic, political and social lives
- Free, compulsory, quality education for all, including non-formal and adult education
- Promotion and protection of small and community-based enterprises and peoples' cooperatives
- Community participation in the conservation of ecological resources

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Statement submitted by International Shinto Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

While Millennium Development Goal 7 has been partly achieved, there are still 1.2 billion people — 20 per cent of the world's population — with no access to safe, potable water. More than 3 billion people are forced to live without basic sanitary systems, including adequate sewerage. In the world, 5-10 million people die from water-borne diseases. Every eight seconds a child dies of a sickness caused by polluted water.

Japan is specialized in developing high-quality technology in fields related to creating water sources. One of the methods for creating water for human use is recycling. Under current circumstances, when the need for water is ever-growing while the limited amount of available fresh water is constantly diminishing, it is very important to reprocess and reuse water as much as possible. Enhancing the recovery percentage and making the most of water resources at multiple levels and in multiple fields are necessary, including developing better solutions and contributing to the improvement of water quality. Reprocessed water has been used mainly for boilers, processing of raw materials and products, cleaning, cooling and adjusting the temperature, but much more complicated processes are required to make water potable.

An innovative and simpler potable water-creation technology has recently been developed by Kanetoshi Oda, President of Japan Polygul Co., Ltd. Mr. Oda has paid attention to and focused on polyglutamic acid, which is a sticky substance of Japanese fermented soybeans, called natto. This acid had been well known for its high water-retention capacity and has been used as a raw material for various cosmetic products. He looked into methods to make the most of polyglutamic acid for water purification and created the flocculent PG α 21 series. This new product is characterized by its entirely natural components and causes no damage to the environment or the human body; natto is also biodegradable. Small amounts of PG α 21 series can flocculate (a process where colloids come out of suspension in the form of flakes) harmful substances, including heavy metals, in a large amount of dirty, tainted water, which can then be filtered as potable water. It quickly forms flocks (or flakes) and takes a very short time to precipitate. It works in a wide range of dirty waters with a pH of 4-12, which can be transformed into water safe for drinking.

Mr. Oda has been trying to distribute the product to water-scarce countries; not to make a profit, but as a social responsibility to save lives. As a pilot project, in a village in Bangladesh where children had to drink dirty pond water and became sick, he donated PG α 21 series and a filtering facility to establish a business model to sell purified, drinkable water in order to make the system self-sustainable.